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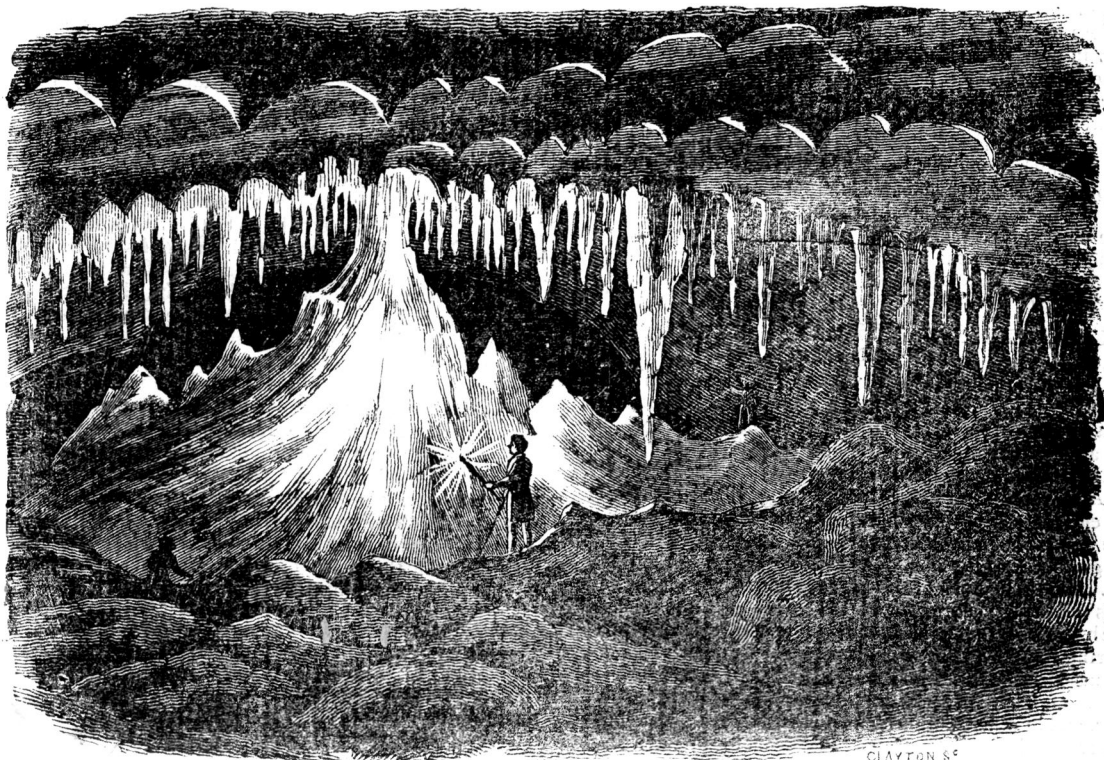
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THE EXTRAORDINARY CAVE RECENTLY DISCOVERED ON LORD KINGSTON'S ESTATE.

KINGSTON CAVE.

In the early part of this summer a poor man, of the name of Gorman, residing on the estate of the Earl of Kingston, near Burnt Court, in the County of Tipperary, about midway between Caher and Mitchelstown, whilst quarrying stones on part of his little farm, observed that several of the smaller pieces slipped through a fissure in the rock and disappeared. From the long known fact of a very extensive cavern being in the immediate neighbourhood, he was led to suppose that this aperture communicated therewith; and on widening it sufficiently to allow him to pass, he went down, provided with a light, &c. Finding the place far more extensive than was anticipated, he was induced to prolong the examination until his light failed, leaving him in total darkness: from this predicament he was at length relieved by some of his family and neighbours, who became uneasy at his long absence. This cave has since been visited by several persons of respectability, whose report goes far to place it, in point of magnificence, before any cavern in the united kingdom of which we have an account.

On entering through an opening, just sufficient to allow you to pass, you come to a large space, and thence descend for thirty or forty feet down an inclined plane, and into a sort of angle formed by the roof and floor, (which approach quickly to each other, and join a few feet lower down.) You are soon obliged to slide down the rest of this slope, so contracted has the space overhead become, and when at the bottom, have to work yourself to the right hand in a reclining position. After progressing some time in this manner, with considerable difficulty, you arrive suddenly at the edge of a fearful chasm, which threatens to put an end to all further pro-

ceeding. At length, when the eye becomes a little used to the gloom of the place, the top of a ladder is discovered, appearing just above the brink of a dark, and, apparently, unfathomable abyss; with some considerable exertion you gain a footing on the ladder; descending, with cautious steps, about twenty feet, you land on a very rugged bottom, covered with large rocks. The lights being now prepared, and each adventurer and guide furnished with one, you proceed in a position varying between *stooping and creeping*, on "*all fours*," for a long way, until the roof becomes of a sufficient height to allow your standing upright. Hitherto there is little, if any thing, to interest—all being dark and gloomy, and the black looking limestone rocks being nearly bare—but from hence the beauties of the place begin to show themselves; first in the form of "*stalactites*," occurring here and there, whilst in the bottom is discovered fine incrustations of spar, interspersed with "*stalagmites*" in endless variety. As you proceed, the scene becomes more and more interesting, the rocks being covered in many places with brilliant spar; from the roof also depend thousands of stalactites, many of the larger of which (as in the cut above) having, in process of time, joined the stalagmite below, assume the appearance of pillars and their bases widely extended. You also meet with occasional magnificent specimens, having the appearance of *drapery*, and hanging from the roof of the projecting rocks in the most graceful folds, the effect of which, on placing a light behind, is splendid beyond description. The cavern soon branches out in various directions, and the further you proceed the more perfect and interesting are its beauties. In one long hall or passage, vaulted at the top, a curtain hung down which filled up the way completely and prevented further access, until a small aperture was broken

in it to admit of creeping through. In another of these halls or galleries a curtain hangs gracefully down at one side, occupying nearly half the opening. After much rain the bottom is, in many places, very wet; but even these spots have their beauties, for, in the pools thus formed, some of the most elegant crystallizations are going forward.—The opening to this cavern is situated about a quarter of a mile N. E. of the entrance of the long known and remarkable cave of *Oonahareaglisha*, on the lands of Skeheenarinka, and in the same hill side, but does not appear to communicate with it, extending below in nearly an eastern direction. It is in the estate of the Earl of Kingston, and has been visited by Lord Kingsborough, who has directed that the spars, &c. shall be carefully preserved from injury. It is difficult to form an accurate estimate of distance or space under the circumstances which attend a visit to this place, yet it may be computed that the cave extends from a quarter to half a mile in some directions, and probably much further, as a large portion of it remains still unexplored. The height of the roof is, in some places, from twenty to thirty feet.

EXTRAORDINARY CAVERNS NEAR KILKENNY.

About two miles from the city of Kilkenny, in the neighbourhood of the Park-house of the Dunmore family, are a number of caves, as curious, though not so extensive as those mentioned in the foregoing article. They are thus mentioned by a visitor:—

“After a difficult descent of about one hundred feet, the entrance into this subterranean world is gained.—The appearance of the first cavern is uncommonly awful, and gives rise to the idea of a Gothic structure, grand in ruin. The solemnity of this place is not a little increased in its effect by contrast with the gaiety of those scenes which present themselves on every side previous to our entering it. The floor is uneven, and stones or rocks of various sizes are scattered over it. The sides are composed of ragged rock, in some parts covered with moss, and in others curiously frosted; and from the arched roof several huge rocks project, that seem to threaten instant ruin. The circumference of this cave is not less than two hundred feet, and its height above fifty. There is a small, but continual dropping of water from the ceiling, and a few petrifications resembling icicles. This place has its inhabitants, for, on entering it you are surprised with a confused noise, occasioned by a multitude of wild pigeons, disturbed by your intrusion. From this apartment there is a passage to the left, where, by a small ascent, a hole is gained resembling the mouth of an oven, but larger, which introduces you to a place where, by the help of torches, day-light being entirely excluded, a surprising scene of monstrous stones piled on each other, and chequered with various colours, tremendous rocks, and an infinity of stalactites, presents itself. Nature, one would imagine, designed the first cave as a preparative for what remains to be seen: by it the eye is familiarized with uncommon and awful objects, and the mind totally fortified against terrors, the natural result of a combination of appearances so surprising, terrific, and menacing. The spectator flatters himself that he has nothing to behold more awful, nor anything more dangerous to meet, than what he finds in the first cavern. But he soon discovers his mistake, for the bare want of that light which dresses nature with gaiety, is alone sufficient to render the second far more dreadful. In the first place he fancies ruin frowns upon him from several parts; but in this it is more immediately threatened from a thousand rocks, rudely piled on each other, bursting in on him from the bending sides, or pendant from the roof, while by one false step you are dashed to pieces in the precipice beneath. It would indeed be impracticable to range over the apartment, had not nature, as if studious of the safety of the curious, caused spars to shoot from the surface of the rocks, which prevent your feet from slipping beneath, and at the sides serve as ladders, whereby you can ascend and descend with tolerable facility. This astonishing passage leads to an apartment far more curious than any of the rest. On entering it, one is induced to be-

lieve himself in some ancient temple, decorated with all the expense and magnificence of art; yet notwithstanding the splendour and beauty that catches the eye on every side, there is something of solemnity in the fashion of the place, which causes itself to be felt by the most indifferent spectator. The floor is covered with a crystalline substance, and the sides in many places encrusted with the same, fashioned in style not unlike the Gothic style of ornament; and the top is embossed with inverted pyramids of the like beautifully white and pellucid matter. At the points of these stalactites are perpetually hanging drops of pellucid water; for when one falls another succeeds. These splendid gems contribute not a little to the glorious appearance of the roof, which, when illuminated, appears as if formed of the purest crystal. Here also are three extraordinary and beautiful congelations, which, without the aid of a strong imagination, may be taken for an organ, an altar, and a cross. The former, except when strictly examined, appears to be a regular work of art, and is of considerable size: the second is of a simple form, rather long than square; and the cross reaches from the floor to the roof, which may be about twenty feet. These curious figures are produced by the water which distils from the upper part of the cave impregnated with lime, which by gradual petrification, acquired at length those forms now so pleasing. When this curious apartment has been sufficiently examined, the guides lead you a considerable way through winding passages, until a glimmering light agreeably surprises you. Here your journey—a quarter of a mile from the entrance—terminates: but on returning to the first cavern, an entrance into other apartments as extensive, though less curious, presents itself. The passages into some are so low, that you are obliged to creep through them; by these you proceed, till the noise of a subterraneous river is heard; but farther none have ventured.”

THE BOGS OF IRELAND.

Whether these morasses were at first formed by the destruction of whole forests, or merely by the stagnation of water in places where its current was choked by the fall of a few trees, and by accumulations of branches and leaves, carried down from the surrounding hills, is a question never yet decided. In a Report of the Commissioners on the Bogs of Ireland, published some years since, it is stated that three distinct growths of timber, covered by three distinct masses of bog, are discovered on examination; and it was given as the opinion of Professor Davy, that in many places, where forests had grown undisturbed, the trees on the outside of the woods grew stronger than the rest, from their exposure to the air and sun; and that, when mankind attempted to establish themselves near these forests, they cut down the large trees on their borders, which opened the internal heart, where the trees were weak and slender, to the influence of the wind, which, as is commonly to be seen in such circumstances, had immediate power to sweep down the whole of the internal part of the forest. The large timber obstructed the passage of vegetable recrement, and of earth falling towards the rivers; the weak timber, in the internal part of the forest, after it had fallen, soon decayed, and became the food of future vegetation. Mr. Kirwan, who wrote largely on the subject, observes, that whatever trees are found in those bogs, though the wood may be perfectly sound, the bark of the timber has uniformly disappeared, and the decomposition of this bark forms a considerable part of the nutritive substances of morasses; notwithstanding this circumstance, tan is not to be obtained in analysing bogs; their antiseptic quality is, however, indisputable, for animal and vegetable substances are frequently found at a great depth in bogs, without their seeming to have suffered any decay; these substances cannot have been deposited in them at a very remote period, because their form and texture is such as were common a few centuries ago. In 1786, there were found, seventeen feet below the surface of a bog, in Mr. Kirwan's district, a woollen coat of coarse, but even net work, exactly in the form of what is now called a spencer. A razor, with a wooden handle, some iron heads of a